Superintendent Advisory Group Meeting Minutes
July 10, 2012

Welcome and Introductions (10:07 am – 10:12 am)


- Durflinger: Role of the Center for the Study of Education Policy: Supplying input to the process of superintendent standards redesign. SAG meeting is advisory. Recommendations will be honored, but particular ideas may or may not be implemented, though.

Overview of the Educator Licensure Revision and Charge of SAG (10:12 am – 10:32 am) (see attached slides from the presentation)

- Tomlinson: SB 1799 (Senate Bill 7) passed in June 2011. Consolidated educator licenses. More easily locate teachers and their endorsements; streamline the process for P-12 teachers.

- Previous Redesigns.
  - Elementary and Middle School took a year, year and half. Elementary: worked with common core experts, teachers, etc. Worked on literacy at the elementary grade levels, and will be working more on math, middle grade literacy, to make it all standards-based. Reduced elementary to K-5 or K-6 instead of K-9 to isolate elementary content standards and middle school standards.
  - Early Childhood. Lots of controversy about grade range. Where does it begin and where does it end? Right now it spans birth through third grade. This endorsement is very concerned with developmental aspects of students, but by elementary, begins to shift focus to content.
  - Principal redesign took 4-5 years, expect superintendent redesign to only take 6 months or so. Switched to P-12 instead of K-12. (Also should consider for superintendents.) Looked at leadership ability of teachers/aspiring principals. Can they work w/ other teachers, show leadership etc. Should also consider this for superintendents. Partnerships between preparation programs and schools and districts are also important. Also a lot of curriculum redesign. Adjusted internship requirements, with many possibilities, notably focused on competencies and leadership, not just checklist of required number of hours. No requirement of hours, just competencies; also required assessments common across the state. Also looked into alternative pathways to become a principal. No more provisional licenses for principals after 2014. Must be through a certified program.

- Topic Areas and Research Questions (see attached presentation for the areas and questions)
  - Grade Span
    - K-12 or P-12?
Leadership Standards
  - Which standards do we want to go by?

Selection/Admission
  - What selection tools?

Course Content
  - What is covered in various courses?

Internship Experiences
  - Critical, reasonable, and valuable internship experiences.

Assessments
  - What kinds of assessments are there throughout the program?

Partnerships
  - Who should be involved? What kind? MOU?

**Additional Topic Areas**
- Alternate superintendent program (Illinois has one that needs reviewing)
- How do you ensure that there is family support, community support? Need greater emphasis on this.
- PERA (i.e., teacher and principal evaluation mandates) and SB 1799 (educator license restructuring) puts more pressure on this process of redesigning the superintendent endorsement
- Implementation of the Common Core

**Questions/Discussion. (10:32 am – 11:22 am)**
- Does this discussion and endorsement include Chicago? No, Chicago has a CEO and is out of our purview, but it includes 863ish other districts throughout Illinois. Should that be changed? (May tackle that point.) Or why does Illinois not act more like MI, which has no superintendent endorsement at all?
- Accountability: What is a good timeline for redesigning and sunsetting old Supt preparation programs? Programs need time to redesign their program, but there has to be an end date for candidates to be admitted and graduated, etc.
- Principal Preparation Redesign: Staff will supply the new principal prep rules for SAG.
- People who are assistant superintendents but do not hold superintendent endorsements. Is that part of our concern/purview? (Clark: If we change it, they’ll just change their titles to “director” or “Assistant to XXXX...” etc to avoid it.)
- Who can evaluate principals? (Anyone who has been trained through the State’s evaluation training system.) Is that what we are going to keep or are we going to adjust that to require superintendents to do that? (It would take a legislative change. It’s a district decision at this juncture.
- How strict/loose will the assessment requirements be? Different expectation of local versus building administrator. There seems to be a more prevalent pathway of teacher -> central office -> superintendent than there has been in the past. Traditionally, teachers usually held the principalship before becoming a superintendent. Should we require administration/building-
level leadership positions before that? Not having building-level leadership experience doesn’t inherently make them ineffective, but is it something we want to account for to ensure more leadership experience?

- Need more school board people in SAG since they’re so involved in the hiring of superintendents. Especially because it can be a lot more of a politicized process instead of hiring a true leader. School board training of superintendents? Candidate selection is a smaller pool than preferred, often with a lot of shuffling around among districts. Equally important to focus on the competencies AND the attractiveness of the job, recruitment. At this point, many of the advisory group members said that the job isn't attractive to potential recruits for the following reasons:
  - Don’t want to deal w/ board members
  - Have to be on call 24/7/365
  - Money differential insufficient (given the responsibilities and time—the salary is not much more than other leadership positions in the district with less time and responsibility)
  - Unattractive lifestyle choice
    - difficult for dual-income families (having to move around if a spouse has a job, kids are in school, etc),
    - Media is worse to deal with (always under the gun, stressed)
    - School shootings, emergency planning, violent crimes
    - Huge policy requirements
    - Facebook effect: everyone knows everything that is true or untrue about a small town
    - Credibility issues
    - Short tenure
    - NCLB changed the superintendency
      - less about basketball and much more about media and student achievement
    - Fear of/inexperience with school finance, budget, bonds

- So much of an emphasis on relationships, visibility. Need balance between relationships and managerial skills.

**Framing the Issues** (11:22 am – 12:10 pm) (Durflinger and Hood)

- **Topic Areas**
  - Want to lay out road map of what the next 6 months will be.
  - Who was invited? IASBO?
  - Ethics piece is important for leadership standards.
  - Is there alignment between principal prep and superintendent prep? Should there be alignment?
  - Is there currently an internship for superintendents? Yes but the experiences vary in quality and duration across programs in the state.
  - What standards are we interested in abiding by? Tomlinson: we try to stick with national standards. ISLLC, McREL, 5 ISAL leadership lenses. Can be more than one set of standards. SAG wants to see those standards, juxtaposed with each other.
They want all the current courses offered in superintendent certificate programs described and juxtaposed in a huge chart. (Make sure ambiguous course titles are clarified) JUST what’s required for the certificate. Get as many syllabi and assessments and standards (words not numbers) as possible, especially for the ambiguous course titles). Also information about the internships. Align to what competencies they are interested in.

Framing the Issues (continued, after lunch) (12:40-1:10 pm)

- Topic Areas
  - Principal Preparation Internship in based on competencies. Used to be, for example, “300 hours required,” now the focus is on achieving a standard of performance on competencies instead of time. Who supervises the superintendent internship and certifies that quality of that internship?

- General Questions, Reactions:
  - Defining in a more substantive manner, the relationship with school boards. How to develop a collaborative relationship between the superintendent and board to ward off antagonism between the two (Durflinger: “remember the ultimate board is the community”). Emphasis on how to deal with school boards and developing that relationship (so as to develop superintendent candidates), especially given the era of new media (blogs, facebook, etc); the main issue is to look at the competencies to ensure that all candidates are prepared to handle these tasks (e.g. what should and should not be happening)
  - Grade span. Expand K-12 to P-12 or P-20? Expanding to 20 might sound like stepping on the toes of postsecondary education. There was general consensus that this should be a P-12 endorsement.
  - Looking at neighboring state licensure standards? Any models that might benefit our redesign? It was suggested to look at Florida, Maryland, and Texas, and any other states where they have strong school districts and/or where they have focused on reforming district and school leadership.

Need for Information and Resources (1:10 pm – 1:50 pm)

- More specific curriculum information at the universities
- Other state redesign standards: what is their model for superintendent endorsement? (If they’re all using the same standards, what is it that sets their programs apart?)
- Look into the new principal preparation program standards and criteria as well.
- Comparing large versus small districts. (Look into possible research.) Personnel course in their programs? Must be universal and account for both rural and urban. Clark: training in urban and rural is important, but less important than an overall competence to run whatever size district you’re placed at; Swanstrom: it’s a hiring decision, not a training decision.
- Once they get their license, will we need to change license renewal standards also?
- Cultural aspects need to be brought into the curriculum as well. Districts can change drastically, nearly overnight.
- Split into subcommittees? For the competencies we will stay as a whole group, since the competencies will drive the rest of the work. Then, we will reinvestigate the
possibility of breaking into subcommittees which would report back to the whole
group to come to consensus on recommendations to give to ISBE.

- Anyone missing? (IASBO, IEA (other teacher's union), ELL or diversity
  organization? SPED? Legislative staffer?
- Technology, transparency, and driving student achievement have transformed the
  role of the superintendency greatly. Moving from management to leadership and
  community involvement. Emphasis on consensus building –Hutchison.
- One note to keep in mind as we do this work: The relationship between
  superintendent and principal may be different as it has been with the new cadre of
  principals graduating from the redesigned programs. They will have been trained to
  be stronger instructional leaders. So how does that affect how we prepare a
  superintendent, given that we don't know how that relationship may be affected?

**Next Steps (1:50 pm – 1:55 pm)**

- Before the next meeting, staff will complete the following tasks and share this
  information with advisory group members:
  - Two charts
    - Current Superintendent Preparation Program courses and internships
    - Crosswalk of Leadership Standards
  - Look into other states' redesigns and licensure systems (MD, TX, FL, others?)
  - Send the IL Principal Preparation Program rules
  - Compile data from superintendent surveys
    - Art Fessler’s dissertation on Superintendent Preparation in IL
    - Center’s annual Superintendent Survey
    - Sandra Watkins and colleagues also have research on
      Superintendents’ knowledge needs
  - Rules for current superintendent standards
  - Check to see if the principal assessment framework is ready (Linda)
  - Doodle poll for August, September, October, November, and December
    meeting dates.